

Meet the Instructor

Hi, my name is Larry Ridenhour. I'm a Recreation Planner on the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area. I've been on the RMiS Team now for a little over 10 years and the area that I work in has the highest concentration of nesting birds of prey in all of North America and one of the top five places in the world. I spend most of my time out visiting with people who are there to see the birds and which gives me a lot of time to do a lot of bird watching myself, which is one of my favorite pastimes.

I have worked for the BLM for about 16 years and look forward to some day when I can retire.

Introduction to Recreation Sites

Hi, my name's Larry Ridenour and in this section, we're going to learn about sites. Specifically, we're going to learn what sites are and decide if the area should be included in the RMiS database. We're going to learn how to create a new site, how to change site information, how to create a formula for a site. How to add visitor use to the site, how to view that visitor use in the journal, how to edit or delete your visitor use, how to make a site inactive and then reactivate an inactive site, how to delete a site, and finally how to move a site to a different RMA.

Now we're going to start by asking what exactly is a site. Well, a site can be thought of as an area where management actions are required to provide a specific recreation setting or activity opportunity to protect resource values or to provide visitor safety. Now, by management actions I mean you pay attention to the area with some sort of action, such as ranger patrols, trash clean-ups, visitor counts, or resource damage monitoring.

Now, only you can decide if a site should be included in the database. You do not have to include all of your sites in the RMiS database. Now there are basically three types of sites that we typically deal with. We have developed sites which are permanent facilities with significant investment, we have minimal development sites that have limited investment, and then we have undeveloped sites which may have no facilities, but you're still monitoring the visitor use that occurs there.

Now developed sites are things like campgrounds, visitor centers, significant trailheads, and watchable wildlife viewing sites, for examples. A minimal development site might include an area where you have a single kiosk or maybe a fire ring at a popular campsite, a pullout at an overlook, or just a simple trailhead. Undeveloped sites are just that, they're undeveloped but use occurs there. Such as an OHV staging area, possibly a favorite shooting area, or a simple river access point.

Some things to remember is that each site is created by the RMiS user and you want to include all of your developed sites and you may or may not want to include your minimal developed sites and undeveloped sites. The user gets to decide.

If you set your minimal development sites and undeveloped sites can be accounted for, where do you do that? Well, you do it in the disbursed site. So you ask, what exactly is the disbursed site? Well, let's say in this example here, we have a campground, a trailhead, a couple of river access points, and an overlook. In our RMP we have decided that this is a special recreation management area with a boundary and that boundary encompasses 3,000 acres. Now, each of these sites has a delineated area around it and each has a specific number of acres associated with it. Now, all of the area not in these specific sites, which is the green area shown here, is your disbursed area. In our case, it's 2,765 acres. Now, where did that acreage come from? Well, that is calculated by the RMiS database by taking the total acres in your SRMA, subtracting out the acreage for each of the sites, and what is left over is your disbursed area.

Now, it doesn't mean that there's no use occurring there. You may have some undeveloped sites such OHV staging area or perhaps popular fishing spot or popular bird watching area where use is occurring and you're tracking that use, but you don't have these sites listed in RMiS. All of that use gets accounted for in your disbursed area. Now, the RMiS database considers the disbursed site the same as all the other identified sites.

Now that we know what a site is, let's learn how to create a new site in the database.

### Creating and Editing a Site

So once you log in, you will get an office information page and since we are using the training database for this training, our background screens are blue instead of green,

and one other difference is that, for the RMAs, there --- On the live database, the button is RMA/Sites, but in the training database it's still just RMAs.

Now, since we are going to create a new site, and all sites are located within the RMAs, we first click on the RMA's button. Next we click on the sites button. This will open up our site information page for our office. Now we're going to create a new site, so we simply click on the button that says new. This will open up the site editor page. First thing we want to do is change the site name, so we will block it and we're going to create a campground called Cottonwood. Now, we need to put in a real property number. So we're just going to make one up real quick and we're going to make it 250 acres. Now, if you have the latitude and longitude, you can put those numbers in. If you don't, that's okay. Our primary site type, as you can see from our list, we have a lot of choices. We're going to pick campground. It is public domain ownership, so we're going to leave that the same. And let's say that our campground is only open from the spring through the fall, so we're going to change the date to March and we're going to close in October. So we're going to change our dates from March 1<sup>st</sup> 'til October 31<sup>st</sup>.

Management responsibility is BLM and the fee information on the current system does not reflect changes from the new FLREA (Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act) legislation. We still have the old fee demo information. So since this is a fee site, we'll click fee demonstration site. The next bit of information we need to put in is that fees are collected, so we select it from our choices. And if you have any type of interpretive information available at your campground, you can select those. And for our site, we'll say that we have some signs. Now, to select multiple, you can either use control or shift. And we'll say we have a brochure available. So I held down control and clicked printed material to select both of them.

If you have a project plan available for this site, you can click it and I've already put in that we have a business plan. But, by default, we have none selected. If you do want to create a new plan, off to the right, there is new button and if you click it, it will open up with information where you can add in the name, a plan number, and a date. So we add in the name of our plan. We can use the tab to jump to the next field and our number is 01 and the date will be October 1, 2008. And if we want to put in notes like, "This is a test site", we can add that. We scroll back up and everything looks good so

we're going to click save, which will take us back to the site information page and we can see all the information that we have in here now. You'll notice that the visits are zero because we don't have any use included and our visitor use formula is default, which is created automatically by the RMiS program. On the left, since we said this is a fee site, we have BLM fees and our RUPs as new buttons available for our use. And we will get to those a little bit later.

Now that we've created our new site, if you need to make any changes to information listed on the site information screen, you can only make those changes from the site editor page. Now, how do we get to that site editor page? All the editable regions in RMiS are shown as hyperlinks. That is, they are blue, underlined highlights.

Now, if you need to change any site information on your page, for instance, on our new site, we misspelled the project plan name. If we want to change that, you start by clicking the highlighted site name and that will open up the site editor page, which is the exact same screen that we use to create our new site. You scroll down to where we have misspelled our project plan. And for most of the changes you might make, you just click within inside the area and you can make your changes. But since the project plan is a little bit different, we click the edit button. That will give us the screen we originally had for creating our new plan and we simply delete, make the necessary change, look over and make sure everything is correct, and we click save. Now you can change any of the information that is available on your site.

One particular site we need to look at is the disbursed site. Since the disbursed site is created by the RMiS database, you'll notice that the real property number is always zero, the primary site type is disbursed use, and the number of acres is calculated by the RMiS database. Now, we can show this by looking at the editor page and you'll notice that you cannot change these four pieces of information. They are generated by the database. You can change other information, but not those four. Now, since we didn't make any changes, we can hit cancel to get back to the site information page.

Now that we have our new site created, Cottonwood Campground, we're going to want to add visitor use to this site. But before we can do that, we need to change this default formula to a usable formula for the database so that as we enter visitor use, the database knows how to allocate that use.

### Site Formulas

Now we'll see how to create a site formula. There are two places you can create a site formula. One is from the site page itself. The other is from the master formula list. Now the master formula list contains formulas that were created from the master page or that were copied there using the copy to master button. Now formulas created from the site page are not automatically copied to your master list and most users never take the time to copy their formulas to the master list.

Now since this is a training session, we might as well show you the best way to create a new site formula and that's from your master formula page. And the best way to make sure that all your formulas are available to you is to create them or copy them to your master list. So, from your office page, you have to scroll down a little bit. Oops, I hit the wrong button. You have to scroll down to your formulas. This will open up your master list of formulas. Now you can get to all of your formulas from this site using the drop down list. Your site formulas, SRPs, river, roads, and trail formulas. Since we created a new site, and by default, site formulas is the first --- this is where we're going to create our new site formula for Cottonwood Campground.

Simply click new on the left and that will open up our site visitor use formula master list editor. Now, the items that we have are the name for our formula, an activity for this site, the average number of hours, and the percent of people doing that activity. So the first thing we want to do is change the name to something that is usable other than default. So we're going to call this Cottonwood Campground formula. Now, we have a list, long list, of activities that are available for all of our sites. First thing we should show is that people are camping there. And so on average, people who are staying overnight --- Camping, if you think of it as activity of when they are actually in camp either just resting or sleeping at night, on average they do that approximately 12 hours a day and everybody that camps there does it so we have a 100%.

Now, to add a new activity, we click insert and you'll notice that a new line has been added with unspecified activity. And we're going to add a few more things to our formula. Since our campground is near a lake, we're going to say that people are fishing there. On average they fish for about four hours and about 70% of the people that camp

here, fish. Another activity would be swimming and on average they do that for about one hour. But only about 30% of the people camping there swim. Click insert to add another activity and we're going to show that people are also picnicking at the site. And if you consider all of the eating of your meals as picnicking, you can say probably about four hours a day spent doing that and pretty much everybody is doing it, so we put 100%. We'll add one more activity and that would be hiking. We have some nice trails around our campground and they probably do that about three hours and about 40% of the people at the campground are hiking.

Now, if we look at the average hours for our formula, these add up to 24 hours. Now your formulas don't always have to add up to 24 hours. If you had a day use site where the average length of stay was only 30 minutes or two hours, then your formula should add up to about that.

Since we have everything and it looks correct, we're going to click save. Now, our new Cottonwood Campground formula is right here in our master list and we now want to apply this formula to our new campground. But before we do that, we're going to go back to our office page, we're going to go into the RMA and we're going to select sites and we're going to look at our site information page to see that the RMiS default formula is still the formula being used right now.

To change this from the master formula list, we click formulas to get to our list. Now we want to apply this new formula to our site. So we click the apply button and that's going to open up a window which will show all of your formulas, all the site formulas, on the left and your sites on the right. Now we have a drop down for the RMA and right now we're looking at the CJ Strike RMA, but if we wanted to look at all of our RMAs, we can click all and then hit the select button.

This will show all of the sites for our field office. We're going to show only our particular RMA. So we, on the left, we pick the formula we want to apply and we pick the site and we click save. And when we do this, we're going to get a warning that's going to tell us that we're changing a formula for a site and since the formula associated with the Cottonwood Campground is the default formula created by RMiS, we want to click ok so that this default formula is replaced. Now we're going to navigate back to our site from RMAs to Sites, and we're going to look at Cottonwood Campground and at the

very bottom you'll notice that our new Cottonwood Campground formula is now associated with our site.

And that's how you create a site formula from the master formula page and you apply to your site.

In this section, we're going to learn how to create a new site formula from the Site page. And we'll also learn how to edit an existing formula. Now, since the RMiS database creates a default formula whenever a new site is created, editing an existing formula is the exact same steps of creating a formula from the site page. Now the main thing to remember is that when you create a formula from the site page, after you're finished, make sure that you copy that formula to your master list. So, earlier I created a new picnic site and now we're going to see how we will create a new formula for that site.

The first thing we want to do is to navigate to our new picnic site. So we go to the RMA and then to the site. And from our drop down list, we're going to go to lake view picnic site, which I created a little bit earlier. We'll scroll down to see that we have the default formula created by RMiS. Now, to edit the formula, you notice that it is a hyperlink. By clicking the hyperlink, opens up and shows you your formula for this site. But you notice you can't edit this formula. All you're doing is looking at it. And so in order to edit it, we must click the highlighted default formula name. That will open up our formula editor.

At this point, we go through the exact same steps of creating a new formula that we did using the master formula list. So we will just call this our picnic formula and we're just going to make a very simple selection of picnicking and people, 100% of the people do it and they do it on average for about half an hour. And so, instead of one hour, we will put 0.5 to represent half an hour. Now you can put as small as 0.1 average hours in the database. This is going to be a simple formula. We're going to click save, and we see our picnic formula. Activity is picnicking. Average hour is .5 and 100% of the people do it. We'll go back to our sites. Now, if we look at our lake view picnic site at the bottom, our picnic formula is now associated with this site.

Now we have our picnic formula and if we look at it, we have picnicking, but we realize that there's actually a portion of the people that are taking photographs from our

picnic site and we really want to capture that information. So we want to edit this. We click the highlighted name, and we want to insert a new activity. So we click insert to get our unspecified activity and we're going to pick photography which is located further up and most people do this for only about, maybe, a half hour of wandering around taking pictures. So we'll put in 0.5 and if we wanted to, you know, we added in another activity of --- if I can find it up here.

Let's say they were learning and doing some environmental education, because we have some interesting things around the site. Now, if we click save, we see our new formula. But then we realize that, you know, the environmental education part isn't really that important. And so we want to get rid of that. How do we do that? Well we need to edit the formula, so we have to click our name to get back to the editor. Now you'll notice beside each activity, there is a delete button. So if we click delete beside environmental education, it'll ask you do you really want to delete this activity and you can say ok. Our formula now looks a little better so we're going to click save and we have the formula just how we like it.

### Adding and Editing Visitor Use

In this section, we'll learn how to add visitor use to our site. Now the RMiS database tracks recreation use associated with BLM lands and the database allows you to add visits in many ways. You can add visits through sites, through corridor segments, such as rivers, roads, and trails and area designations, and also through SRPs. But we want to remember that ultimately all use is tied to a specific site or sites, including the disburse site.

To start adding visits, we click the visitor use button. Now, you can find the visitor use button on a variety of places throughout the RMiS database. You can find it at the bottom of the homepage. If you are in your RMAs, there is a visitor use button. If you're at the sites page, there is a visitor use button. If you are in your SRPs, there's a visitor use button. So there's a variety of ways you can get to adding visitor use. Since we're going to start from the office page, we scroll down and we click visitor use to get to our add visits page. Now, by default, a couple of things here. First, sites is the default, but we can also use the drop down to select other areas to add visits. And also by default,



all the RMAs is selected under our RMA list. If we wanted to go to one specific RMA, we could. And then, only those sites would show up. We're going to show all RMAs to show you a little trick about adding lots of information in a very short time.

In the sites box you want to select the sites that you wish to add visitor use to. Now, I'm going to pick Cottonwood. But I'm also going to add use to a couple of other sites. So by holding the control button, I can select multiple sites and select them. If I click one site, it'll select only that one. If I wanted to select all the sites, I can select the first site on the list, scroll down and by holding shift, select the last site and all of our sites are selected.

Now for our example, we're just going to pick a couple of sites. So we're going to pick Cottonwood, we'll pick Cove Rec Site; we're going to pick Higby Cave. Pick Cottonwood, Cove, and Higby Cave. Now, the date that we're adding visitor use for, by default shows up a start date of October 1<sup>st</sup> and end date September 30<sup>th</sup>. The date we're going to put in here is just for the month of October, so we're going to change the end date from 9/30 to 10/31. So we're going to only show one month of use. Change this, 2007. So this will be for last October. On the left, we click add visits. Now, you will see that we have the add visitor use page here and several things are shown. First, the site name is shown with our start and end date that we selected. And, by default, the number of visits is one because if you add use, you have to have at least one. Now, for the month of October last year, our Cottonwood Campground had 426 visits. Cove Rec Site had 358 and Higby Cave had 15 visits. On the left, we click save and our visitor use is saved, although we have no evidence of that. Now, if you want to look at your visitor use, you have to look at your visitor use journal.

Another way we can check to see if the use was added is to go back and look at a specific site. And we did something the program didn't like and we got an error message. Try to go in a different way here. Okay, so, we go back to the RMAs and our sites. Now, we added use to Cottonwood Campground and if you look at the bottom under visits, we'll see that the 426 visits we just added show up in the total and it also shows that these 426 visits were added at the site. If we have other use, say an SRP visit that occurs there, it will show up separately at the bottom.

### Journal Entries

Each time visitor use is added to the database, a record of that entry is created, and this is called a journal entry.

Now the journal entry will display when the data was entered, the amount of use that was added, and it shows which formula is being applied to that use. So, what we're going to cover now is how to view your visitor use entries, make sure that they're there and that they are correct. And we're also going to see how to edit and/or delete your visitor use.

Now with the site information page, if you scroll to the bottom, you can see how many visits are attributed to this site. And in this case, I'm looking at and thinking these are way too many visits for this site. But, there's no way to see other than our list here that we have 13,845 visits. I'm not sure where those visits came from other than site visits. One place I can look is inside the visitor use journal. Click the journal button, this shows all of the entries that we have made. Now, like I said before, each time you enter data, any time you enter visitor use into the database, a journal entry is recorded. Now, each journal entry has a unique journal number that shows you the site name, shows you the start and end dates, shows you how many visits were added and it also has a date stamp of when that entry was created. It also shows you which formula is being used for that entry. So you can scroll through all of your entries for this site.

Now, as I'm looking through, the first thing I see is the entry for October through the end of December and I notice there's 4,525 (visitor use entries). And if I look at my record, I notice that that number should have been 425, not 4,525. So I need to edit this journal entry. To edit the entry, click the highlighted journal entry number, and that will open up our editor page. And at this point, I can correct my number of visits from 4,525 to 425. If there were any other changes I needed to make, I could make those. So that's the only one I need to make here. So we will click save.

We now see that our entry is 425 and not 4,000 so that's one thing, correct? I'm also looking here, we have January through the end the March, 125 visits; that looks good. The next entries are from April through the end of June, 3260; that's correct from my crib notes that I have. My next entry, oh, I see that I have two entries that are exactly the same. And if I look at my date stamp, I notice that they are only about 40 minutes

apart, so somewhere when I was entering data, I must have forgotten I had entered this. So I want to delete one of these. And deleting is similar to editing. So we click the journal entry number and one of the options on the left is delete. So I want to delete this entry, click delete and you're going to get a warning, are you sure you want to delete this item? And you click ok. You're back to our journal and we see that this double entry is now removed. Look down; another thing you'll notice in the entries here is that for this particular rec site, the use, so far, has been day use formula. I also have a set of formulas set up for overnight camping. And so this will show you not only how many visits you're adding, but it also shows you which formulas those entries are being use so that you know that if the entry is using a wrong formula, you can look through and see that.

Now that we have reviewed all of our journal entries, you see that the information should be correct. So we want to go back to our site and look at the total number of visits at the bottom. Now, instead of 13,800, we now have 6,485 and that matches up with what my cheat sheet says I should have for this site.

### Modifying Site Status

In this section we'll learn about what to do with a site that you no longer want. Sometimes you'll get this idea that, you just say to yourself, I want to delete this site. But you must first ask yourself, why do you want to delete this site? Sometimes a site may have been destroyed and there are no immediate plans to rebuild it. Or in old cases where sites were created in the database as an artificial way of entering river and trail use, you might want to get rid of those since the program now allows you to add use directly to rivers and trails. But, in these cases, you have historic data and information that, if you delete the site, will be lost forever. And so, in these cases, we have a function that will allow you to make the site inactive. All the historic data is still there, but the site doesn't show up in your list.

Another example might be that in a planning document, your RMA boundaries have changed and so you think you need to delete the site out of one RMA and create it in the new one. In these cases, we have a function that will let you move a site from one RMA to another. You may have a site that's been decommissioned due to safety issues

or financial reasons, or possible it's been transferred to a different agency. Again, there's historic data associated with this site and you would want to make this site inactive.

A last option might be that the RMiS user is playing around and trying to learn things, and he makes a new site by mistake. It's not a real site, there's no data associated with it. It's just something that was made by mistake. In this case, you really would want to delete the site.

So, we're going to learn how to make a site inactive and then we're also going to learn how to reactive an inactive site if that site becomes usable again.

Okay, now we're back at our Cottonwood Campground site information page and, unfortunately, a hurricane came through and destroyed the site. So our brand new campground is no longer usable and we need to make this site inactive. Now, to do this we need to get to the site editor page. We do that by clicking the site name, which is a hyperlink that will open our site editor page. And if we scroll about halfway down the page, we will notice that there is a little check box next to make inactive. If we just check this box, we click save, and our site is still up on the screen because we haven't really refreshed the database. But if we look at our drop down list, Cottonwood is no longer on our site list. So if we go to a different site, we will go to the disbursed CJ Strike, pull up that screen, we notice we cannot get to Cottonwood anymore because it's not on our drop down list. You also notice on the left, we have a new button that has shown up which says show inactive. This will allow you to see any inactive sites you have in this RMA.

So if we click the show inactive, the site refreshes. Our show inactive now says hide inactive and if we look at our drop down, we notice that Cottonwood site is now back on the list, but we know that it's inactive because there's a small asterisk next to the name. So we can highlight it and pull up Cottonwood Campground and if we don't want to see it anymore, we can click hide inactive and now when we look at our site, it's no longer there. If we get money to rebuild the site and we would like to reactivate this campground, we have historic data that was collected and we need to make it active again, we start by clicking the show inactive button, go up to our drop down list, highlight Cottonwood, you need to edit the information about Cottonwood so we click the name to open the editor, go down to our make inactive check box, uncheck the box,

click save, and our Cottonwood Campground has now rejoined all of our other sites in our RMA list.

In this section, you'll learn how to move sites to different RMAs. Now RMiS allows you to do this as long as the RMAs are within the same field office. The move site function will allow you to move the site between RMAs and all the historic visitor use information stays with the site.

Now to move sites between RMAs, we need to first navigate to our RMA screens by clicking the RMAs button. You'll notice we have a button that says move sites. Clicking it opens up our move sites to another RMA page. On the left, we have sites to be moved and the RMA drop down shows all of your different RMAs and under that the sites associated with that RMA. On the right, are all of the RMAs that you could move those sites to.

This is a simple process of selecting the sites you would like to move and let's say we want to move our new Cottonwood Campground to a different --- currently it's in CJ Strike Reservoir --- but we need to move it to the Snake River Birds of Prey NCA RMA. We highlight it, on the left we highlight the RMA we want to move it to and in between we have a little move button and we simply click this button. The screen refreshes and it looks like nothing has happened and nothing actually has happened yet. We need to come over and click save for this operation to take effect. Now, the training database isn't functioning just right, so we're going to have to click cancel button to get back to our RMA screens. But if we come back and look at the Birds of Prey NCA, and we go down to our site list, our Cottonwood Campground is now in the NCA RMA. There it is. Go back to our RMA list and look at CJ Strike Reservoir is no longer in our drop down list of sites.

Finally, after all the previous warning about deleting a site, if you really have to delete a site, ask yourself is there any historical or current visitor use or fees associated with this site? If the answer is yes, then you need to make the site inactive. If the answer is no, then you can delete the site. And that's what we're going to learn how to do now.

Now from the site information page, we want to make sure that we're on the site that we want to delete. We highlight the site name to open up the site editor page. Off to the left, you'll see there's a delete button and we click delete. We get a warning asking

us are you sure you want to delete this item? And we click ok. The page refreshes and now the RMiS database has deleted the lake view picnic site from our site list and it as if this site never existed. Now you want to delete a site, again, only as a last resort, if the site was made by mistake. In most circumstances where you have historic information associated with the site, you would want to make the site inactive.

I hope you've enjoyed learning about sites in the RMiS database.